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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 11-12 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sony reference (JP 11-66766 A). *To address this rejection,*

Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a shock limiter “integrally formed solely of the material of the spring region of the load beam.” Support for this amendment is found in the Application at page 4, paragraph 0051 which states that “integrally formed in the spring aperture 360 within the spring region 326 is a shock limiter 370...”

Fig. 9 and the specification of the Sony reference show or describe a shock limiter (jumping prevention member 31) formed as a discrete or separate component that is attached or fixed to a mounting region 81b of a load beam 81. *See Fig. 9.* The shock limiter of the Sony reference is attached to the mounting region by, for example, “spot welding or adhesion”. In contrast, Applicants’ shock limiter as presently claimed is “integrally formed solely of the material of the *spring region* of the load beam.” (Emphasis added). Applicants’ design provides for economies and efficiencies in the design and manufacture of head suspensions without the need for calculating, installing and controlling an added mass to the load beam or for installing the shock limiter on the load beam. Thus, even considering, solely for the sake of argument (and without conceding), that the Examiner’s position that “it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to unify the two rigidly attached steel pieces...instead of adding mass by separately forming the pieces and attaching them” is accurate, the shock limiter shown in the Sony reference would be unified with the mounting region, rather than the spring region as recited in claim 1.

Claims 11 and 22 recite a shock limiter formed of the same piece of material as the spring region. Similarly, in contrast, as discussed above with respect to claim 1, the shock limiter disclosed in the Sony reference is attached or fixed to a mounting region 81b of a load beam 81.

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Claims 1, 11 and 22 and claims depending, respectively therefrom, are allowable for the above reasons. Withdrawal of the §102 rejection is therefore requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3, 8-13 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Berding (U.S. Pat. No. 5,936,803). To address this rejection, claims 1, 11 and 22 have been amended to recite the shock limiter being formed “without additional mass added to the load beam.”

The Berding patent describes a mass balancing feature 160 added to the load beam intended to balance the mass of the HGA as the load beam swings about hinge 150. Mass balancing feature 160 includes a balancing mass 164 as well as tabs 166 depending therefrom. “The preferred balancing mass 164 is formed from stamped stainless steel, like the base plate 110, and is welded or otherwise attached to the balancing member 160.” *See* Col. 6, lines 53-57. The mass balancing feature 160 is optionally provided with a shock limiter (tabs 166) depending from the balancing mass 164.

In contrast, the shock limiter of the claims 1, 11 and 22 is formed “without additional mass added to the load beam.” Applicants’ design provides for economies and efficiencies in the design and manufacture of head suspensions without the need for calculating, installing and controlling an added mass to the load beam or for installing the shock limiter on the load beam. Thus, even considering, solely for the sake of argument (and without conceding), that the Examiner’s position that “it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to unify the two rigidly attached steel pieces...instead of adding mass by separately forming the pieces and attaching them” is accurate, regardless of whether the Berding balancing feature 160 is unified with the load beam or attached thereto, the balancing feature 160, including the balancing mass 164 and tabs 166 is an additional mass added to the load beam, for the sole purpose of mass balancing the HGA.

Claims 1, 11 and 22 and claims depending, respectively therefrom, are allowable for the above reasons. Withdrawal of the §103 rejection is therefore requested.

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CONCLUSION

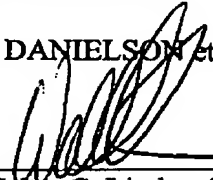
All of the claims remaining in this application should now be seen to be in condition for allowance. The prompt issuance of a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. If there are any remaining questions, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

No fee is believed to be necessary for the entry of this paper. Should any fee be required for entry of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the Faegre & Benson Deposit Account No. 06-0029 and in such event, is requested to notify us of the same.

Respectfully Submitted,

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